

Volume 3 / November 2017

K I N T S U G I

First Magazine to Emerge From Mastodon Collaborations



FICTION
SCIENCE FICTION
CULTURE
ART
PHOTOGRAPHY
MUSIC
CURRENT AFFAIRS
LITERATURE
WELLBEING
FOOD
PHILOSOPHY

Art Work: María Lourdes Escobar

Kintsugi

Volume 3

Editor: Erdal Ozdemir

Cover Art: María Lourdes Escobar

Cover Design: Erdal Ozdemir

Technical Processing & Magazine Building: Erdal Ozdemir

November 2017



María Lourdes Escobar, was enrolled to the School of Fine Arts of Santa Cruz de Tenerife at the age of 11, where she studied for three years, despite being younger than official admissions age. She couldn't continue her studies in art due to economic realities that prevented her. Art has always been part of her life, and with the encouragement of her best friend Jesus Barez she returned back to Art. Jesus Barez recognised Lourdes' talent, saying: "these works have to be seen by the world, artist ". He supported her and supports her tiredness in a way that is anything but easy. Lourdes, at fifty-one years of age, dreams that one day her works will be seen by the world as Wassily Kandinsky would say "The artist is the hand that, through a certain key, vibrates the human soul". Lourdes can be reached on her [Instagram](#) feed @_lourdesescobar, and on Youtube channel: Lourdes Escobar Hernandez. For commissions of illustrations Lourdes can be reached through Instagram.

Submissions & Contact Details

If you would like to feature in future editions of Kintsugi, please send your article, with a short bio and web contact details to our email.

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Kintsugi's Mission

Kintsugi's mission is to bring people together. Kintsugi borrows its name from the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery to give it a new lease of life. The philosophy behind this has its roots in the Wabi-Sabi tradition, which sees existence as imperfect, incomplete and impermanent; instilling a sense of appreciation, acceptance and harmony in the way we live and interact with nature and people.

At Kintsugi, we celebrate the diversity of people and ideas. The Kintsugi magazine covers a diverse set of themes and ideas. We celebrate the value of goodness and the broken lines in each one of us, akin to repaired pottery. We believe that everyone has a stake in the world and everyone matters.

Kintsugi is a project organised and put together through social media, mainly the Mastodon network. Following the initial progress, it also expanded to Twitter and Instagram. The contributors have not met in person or face to face. Our aim here was to show that people can do good and put together something unique and different. We want to encourage others to come forward and do the same.

Erdal Ozdemir

Editor

Editor's Foreword

Welcome to the third volume of the Kintsugi Magazine. The contributors of the first two volumes showed that it is possible to bring people together for a good purpose. We have continually received interest and praise from our readers and contributors. I would like to thank everyone who has supported us in bringing Kintsugi into actualisation. We hope that you enjoy this volume, and we also hope to see some of our reader's work in Kintsugi in the near future.

"The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion." **ALBERT CAMUS**

Contributors

Ainex (Oxana Brugger)

Blythe Baines

Cee Jaye

Dianne Dotson

Dora Vinciguerra

Erdal Ozdemir

Estela Escobar

Jim Bowering

Kevin Hodgson

Laura Ritchie

María Lourdes Escobar

Paul Nathan

Photo: Mandalyn Renicker

CULTURE:INTERVIEW WITH A WELLNESS & FOOD BLOGGER

Dora Vinciguerra interviewed by Erdal Ozdemir



Thank you Dora for accepting our interview request. Can you tell us about yourself. Where are you from and how long have you been following a healthier lifestyle?

Thank you very much for this opportunity. I am an Italian girl and I live in Rome. I am a Law student with a big passion for food and sports since I was a child. Training in the gym and cooking something good to show and share with my friends is my favourite way to relax and be happy!

What does fitness mean to you? Some people concentrate purely on physical activity, what elements are important for a healthy life for you?

To me, fitness means to feel the connection between my body and soul. I am not always

focused on changes to my body. I like the way I am and I accept my imperfections. So to me, it is just important to eat well, train hard and have fun too.

You have a lovely blog, which is also nicely documented on Instagram. What kinds of food do you eat? Do you cook for yourself? In terms of the food you eat, do you follow a strict diet?

Thank you very much! I always post on my food blog the recipes that I try day by day. I like to eat every kind of food. My diet is basically based on eating homemade food using fresh ingredient but that doesn't mean that I don't sometimes eat chips or chocolate! I think that a healthy lifestyle shouldn't totally exclude junk food. The important thing is to eat everything but in moderation.



Asparagus & Eggs Breakfast



Fusilli Integrali con Pesto

What are your fitness goals?

Right now, I don't have any body goals. I like the way I have built my muscles and I am just trying to maintain them.

You have many followers and fans, how has people's reaction been to your blog and your Instagram feed?

People really appreciate my healthy recipes but especially what I write under my body positive posts. I have suffered from eating disorder and depression so I always try to share my positivity and invite people to believe in and like themselves.



Photos: Dora Vinciguerra

Does being an active person help you in your professional life? People often complain about work-life balance, does fitness help in this regard?

Right now I am a Law student so I have to spend a lot of time studying at home! Training at the gym is the way for me to relax and take a break from that schedule! I think that everybody should do some sports because of endorphins: brain chemicals that are natural pain and stress fighters! And obviously because it is a way to have fun and to feel good.

Motivation seems to be a very key element in driving a person to be more active. What motivates you and how do you keep your motivation up?

I don't really have a thing that motivates me. I just love sports and being active.

What has been the most challenging thing for you when following a healthier lifestyle? Did you have to make modifications in your life?

I have always been a sport lover since I was a child and in my family we have always eaten healthy! So I have never changed my lifestyle.

CULTURE: INTERVIEW WITH A WELLNESS & FOOD BLOGGER

For a new beginner who wants to be healthier and more active, what would you recommend?

I just recommend that they start with moving; going to the gym or just going for a walk! And eating food that isn't processed.

You come from a culture that has a very rich food tradition, does that make it difficult? Since there is a lot of temptation from the kinds of food that are available.

Actually, I think that Italian food is one of the most healthiest food choices out there! Particularly because the Mediterranean diet is about pasta, bread, olive oil, vegetables, fruits, fish, meat; nothing better to get healthier.

Do you drink tea, coffee or alcohol? Does that affect your fitness? Many people drink green juices or protein shakes, are they any good?

I only drink water actually and sometimes green tea! Alcohol is one of the first things to cut off in a diet! I think that green juices and protein shakes are a tasty choice but personally I don't really like them.

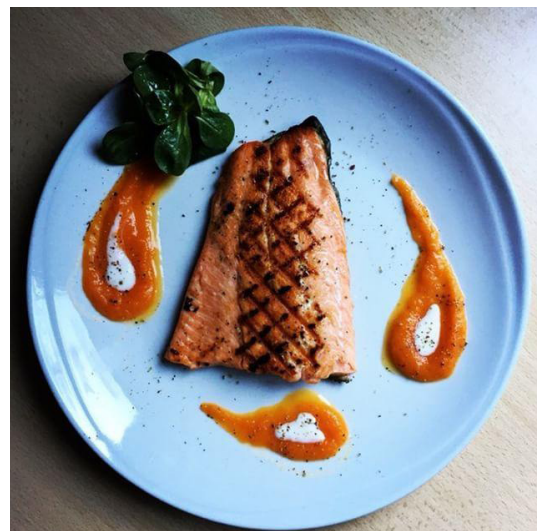
What is your exercise routine? Do you follow certain exercises or do new routines regularly?

I go to the gym 5 times a week and I follow a bodybuilding program that I have put together on my own.

Prosciutto e Fichi



Shrimp Spaghetti



Filetto di Trota Salmonata - Photos: Dora Vinciguerra

Blueberry Pancakes - Photos: Dora Vinciguerra



How does your friends and family react to your healthy lifestyle? Did you have any influence on them to follow a similar lifestyle or were they already doing so?

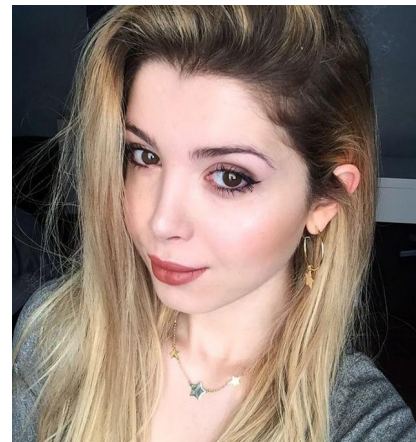
My family always supports me but they don't do any kind of sports, except for my mother. However we totally agree on food. We all eat the same things fortunately!

Many people use gyms as the primary fitness area. In your opinion are they essential for exercise? Or should people use a mixture of gym and their own routines outside?

I think that a mix of both would be perfect for balanced exercise routines.



Il Mio Piatto Preferito



Dora Vinciguerra is a wellness and food blogger. Dora is also a Law student. She is passionate about good food, fitness and wellbeing. Her [blog](#) has great food recipes. Dora's [Instagram](#) feed @doravinciguerra has selection of her recipes, food and fitness experiences.

CONNECTING ACROSS THE GLOBE: CREATIVITY IN THE OPEN

Laura Ritchie

“I feel like this is really going to happen, and it all started with us having a conversation – ‘Oh, wouldn’t it be great to connect?’ And we made it happen. When people ask, I tell them the honest story, it started with a conversation here on Mastodon.” - Tanya Dorey

That conversation began with, ‘wouldn’t it be great if we could do something together one day’, and I replied with, ‘invite me and I’ll come.’ Tanya planned an event: [Creativity in the Open](#), bringing several of us from Mastodon together, alongside other teachers from across the globe, in a mixture of virtual and face-to-face workshops. Tanya is in Kamloops, Canada. I come from Chichester, England, half a world away.

There is a magic in having a door open, and the more we talk the more important it becomes to say out loud that we can risk to reach out and open the doors. However there is a cultural sense, within education and perhaps beyond, that there are things one should do and ways to do those things. Like, by the book. There are many things to learn and books are essential, but the thing that we learn more and more, is that nobody has yet written our story. By that I mean that each learner, student, person has to live that life to write the story. We hope to explore that sense of alive and creativity in the next two days of [workshops](#).

The Instrument Workshop. Photo: Laura Ritchie



I come with music. I can walk with people as they learn to play, metaphorically and physically- on violins and cellos. It is super fun, and people smile and laugh when they are allowed and

allow themselves to let go. Tanya reflected that in indigenous cultures, when thinking of change, art comes first. It reminded me of Tanya’s hashtag on Mastodon: [#thinkingsmall](#). Art, like music, touches people, not because of some inherent power, but because we humans crave communication and somehow, through the societal, materialistic glaze we still allow certain things, like art and music, ‘in’.

Over the next two days we have that opportunity. The door is open and we can cross the threshold to connect, communicate, and write this part of our story together. Spending time with people like Tanya, Christina, Brian, and Rajiv is a privilege, and like childhood friends, we are playing and laughing and loving it. Here’s to the connections now and those yet to come.



Laura is Professor of Learning and Teaching, a cellist, and above all interested in growth and connecting with people. Her research is in self-efficacy (self-belief) and self-regulated learning and her favourite way to teach is through living. She lives on the south coast of England, loves trees, cooking, and people. Laura’s book are available from [Amazon](#). She can be reached on her [website](#) and on [mastodon](#).

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ART: LIFE THROUGH PAINTINGS

Ainex



Sky (on Acrylic) by Ainex

I like to look at planes in the sky and I imagine that I would be on this plane right now and fly somewhere where it is nice and quiet. For me, this image is a longing for homesickness or wanderlust.

Blue Feather (on Acrylic) by Ainex



For me, Blue Feather is a longing for peace and equilibrium.



Goldener Buddha (on Acrylic) by Ainex

I was in Bali this year and I was so fascinated with the culture of Balinese and their creations. I was also fascinated by Hindu and Buddhist figures; they were everywhere on the streets. I was looking for my inner Buddha. Gold Buddha is my inner Buddha.

ART: LIFE THROUGH PAINTINGS

Baliwomen (on Acrylic) by Ainex

I've met a muse on the island of Bali, she's called Fortuna; this is a young girl who has danced in the hotel where I was staying. I visited her every afternoon. She brought Balinese songs to me. I have painted Baliwomen while she was dancing. She looked so marvellous in her traditional dress and her head-dress was gorgeous!

Dali und die Zeit (on Acrylic) by Ainex



I like everything that is crazy and extraordinary and I found Dali's works very extraordinary. What he had for creativity; his explosive fantasy is just amazing!

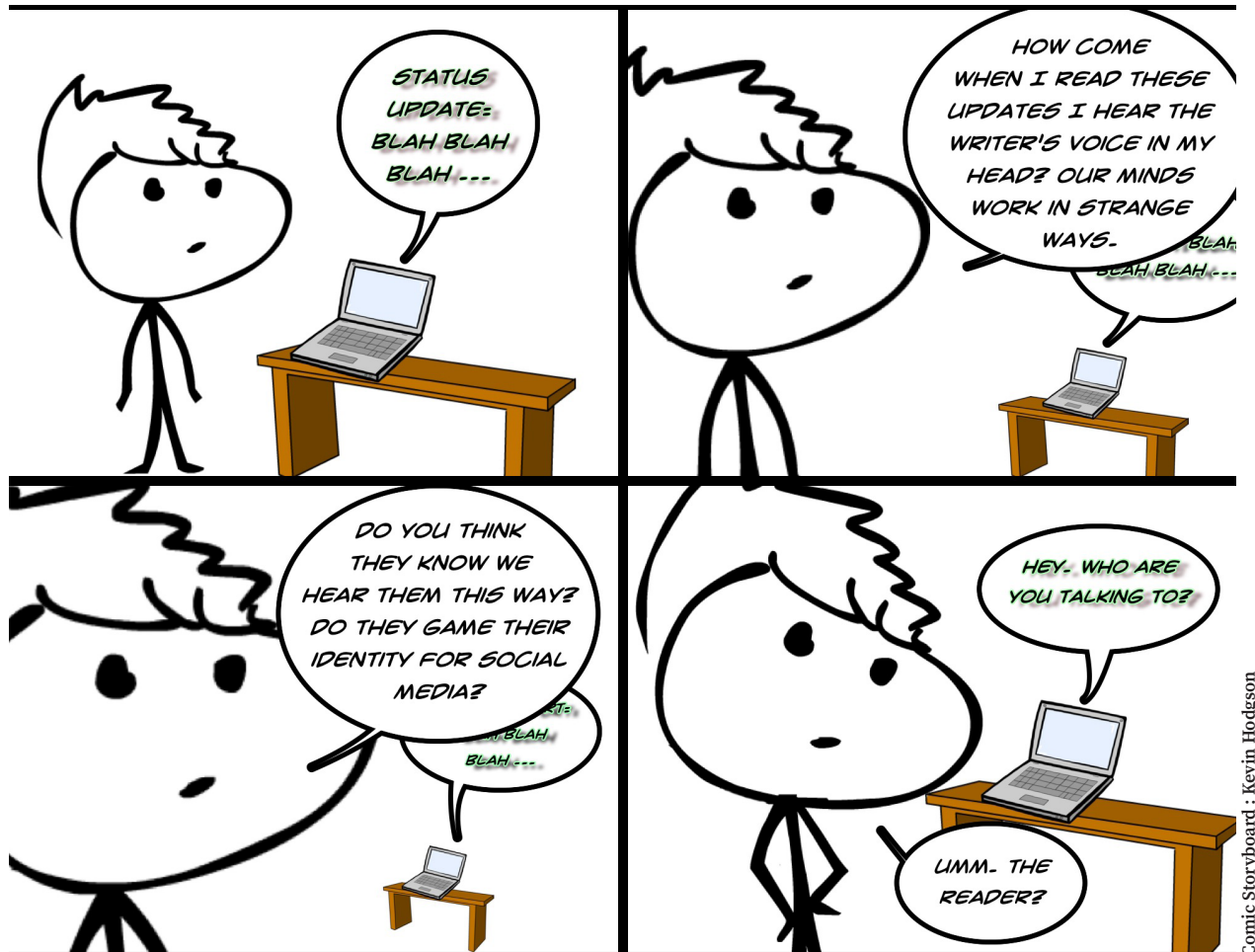


Artist Xenia (or Oxana Brugger) signs her work as Ainex. She is 28 years old. Xenia is half Russian and half Ukrainian. She was born in Russia, near Volgograd. As a child, she was very much interested in music and art. Her father has brought her up with a love for drawing. She attended a music school for 6 years and has also received training in photography. Xenia likes to play chess. She has been trained in a chorus too. Since 2011, she has been living in Germany, near Basel Switzerland. Xenia loves museums and art. She drives spontaneously to other cities where she has not been, to discover them. Xenia also is a champion for inclusion. She is intending to use art as a form of therapy for children with special needs. For commissions of paintings please contact Ainex through her [Instagram](#) feed @ainex_art_007 where some of her work is available as a portfolio.

(Copyright 2017 Ainex)

THESE VOICES IN MY HEAD

Kevin Hodgson



There's this voice sounding out in my head as I traverse a certain person's tweets, newsletters and blog posts. It's a bit whiny and defensive, sort of tinny, as if they were writing into the world with the worry of an unforgiving audience awaiting them. You can tell, too, that they view this unseen audience as one that needs to listen up to the important ideas that need to be said. I try to listen.

I've never heard this person speak.

Another writer I follow has a different kind of

voice in my head. It's got a relaxing cultural accent to it. Smooth. Flowing. My internalised interpretation is likely influenced only by what I know from reading their short social media biography blurb, and from reading what they share out on a regular basis. There's a dialectic cadence to the flow of words of this writer that I find comforting, even when I might disagree with them. I try to listen.

I've never heard this person speak.

Yet another social media writer sounds in my mind like a fast-running train, as if the spaces between words in tweets and updates were inserted only out of necessity. Thoughts tumble. Ideas jangle. There's much to be said and not enough room in an update or tweet or toot to say it. I have to gulp air to keep up with the words, and find myself smiling at the humour laced beneath the stories. I try to listen.

I've never heard this person speak.

This phenomenon of readers inventing the voices of writers is old news for those who are well-versed in literary theory, of course. Anyone who has read an autobiography, or even a novel, has allowed entry into their mind by another. The writer, as companion to the reader. The maker of words inhabits a shared space in our imagination. We readers are hopeful that this visitor respects us for the intrusion, and engages us in new thinking. If not, we close the door and the voice goes silent.

Reading social media is sort of the same as reading books in this regard, and yet, it feels slightly different, too. The stream of updates, toots and tweets can often come in a regular, often unedited, flow. Readers dip in and out. Hashtags become central gathering points. My homepage stream is like a crowded neighbourhood of visitors, all jostling for a moment of my time. I read silently as they chatter noisily (as I do for others, no doubt).

In this vein, we surf the various personalities of these writers. (Or bots ... let's put the idea of bots with personalities aside for some future exploration, shall we?) Readers quietly interact with the writers, inventing what we "hear" when we read the words, even though we may never hear those voices

as actual audio sounds (and if we do, we are often surprised at how different someone sounds compared to the sounds that were once just voices in our heads.)

And you, dear reader? You're perusing this piece, right now. I'm in your mind. Visiting. Talking. You're no doubt hearing me in some fashion as my reading companion. If you follow me on social media, you might have a sense of who I am, and that may influence how you are hearing me. Or it might just be that you are merely listening in on some projected semblance of reality of mine. Are we ever really who we want others to think we are? Which constructed social identity is the true self in this digital age? Any?

Still, that voice, my voice, is what you hear as you read these words that I have written. Thank you for letting me inside your head. I promise to put the furniture back when I am done.



Kevin Hodgson is a teacher in Western Massachusetts, USA, and calls #CLMOOC his affinity space home. He blogs at [Kevin's Meandering Mind](#)

PHILOSOPHY: TOOTS FROM THE PAST

Erdal Ozdemir

"The world turns aside to let any person pass who know where they are going."

Epictetus

A toot is a post on Mastodon. Recently I have begun using a new account on mastodon (mastodon.social/@eox), migrating from my older account. In the process I dived into some of my old toots from several weeks or months ago and like a person who rereads their old diaries, read some of them. This gave me an idea to collect a selection of my toots under an article.

my regular barista."

...

I find cafes intriguing places. It is the modern day temple for many people. I often meet interesting people, sometimes forget about them if enough time has passed.

...

Zanzibar Chai - Erdal Ozdemir



"Normally I consume mostly coffee but there is this tea blend called 'Zanzibar Chai' in a local place. It is my go to tea. It is superb tea."

"I am in a different cafe than my regular place. I've made friends with the cool barista. She is an artist, very smart, talented and as kind as my regular barista. She even gave me a free latte (orange infused coffee beans). Don't tell



St. Paul's Cathedral, London- Erdal Ozdemir

PHILOSOPHY: TOOTS FROM THE PAST

"Sartre has a lecture: Existentialism is a Humanism. In essence he says that we all have an idea of how a person should be. But when it comes to living according to those principals we associate with the "universal person", we live a life of contradiction and double standards. If we are able to follow free will to be a better version of ourselves, we make humanity better. I feel that Mastodon has that existentialist niceness. People use their free will to be good."

"In Eastern philosophy there is the concept of Wu Wei (effortless action). In its simplest description you align your will with that of the universe, acknowledge that you cannot enforce your will. Everything in the universe flows effortlessly, because it is how it should be. When you appreciate and understand that. You understand the natural order of things."

"Wabi-Sabi, is a Japanese philosophy or way of thinking that appreciates imperfection and embraces the transient nature of existence. Essentially we are all imperfect, broken and hurt. Instead of valuing things or beings that represent single continuum of perfection, Wabi-Sabi ensures us to be at peace with all the fragments that constitute who we are."

...

Existentialism, Taoism and Wabi-Sabi are three schools of philosophy that in my opinion offer the best way to reconnect people with the world. My recent visit to China and Japan helped me appreciate Eastern philosophy more and see the progress Japan and China has achieved. I was particularly impressed with Japan and its wonderful culture. I hope to understand and learn more about the Japanese culture.

...



Flat White - Erdal Ozdemir

"Three young people are talking about relationships and festivals and other lovely dreamy things young people talk about in a cafe close to my table. I am happy that they aren't yet corrupted by the nonsense and unfairness of the world. I hope forever they will be so full of life and hope."

"The idea of P'u (the uncarved block) in Eastern philosophy advocates that things have an inherently powerful nature at their simplest self. Over-complication do not create a powerful version of an entity. P'u (or Pu) also means wholeness; true to its nature. Therefore the most powerful ideas are always the simplest ones, that carry all their meaning within."

"One wise person has once said that living is an art of its own. Every day I am reminded more of this. Once someone had told me that she doesn't understand how people can be addicted to some things. I said that, when everyone is running away from something (often themselves or reality) it is surprising that everyone isn't addicted to something. People want to be free and when they can't find that they seek an illusionary freedom in arms of distractions. Life isn't easy or simple."

Photo: Yannick Pulver

“The philosophical overtures in the 12 Monkeys is very rich. Would you sacrifice the entire world and humanity to be with the people you love? Would you sacrifice everything to be in a place where there is no beginning and no end, where the past, the present and the future coexist at the same time, where there is no death or no suffering? This is the question the protagonists are faced with again and again.”

...



Horses - Erdal Ozdemir

Socrates had famously said that an unexamined life is not worth living. Perhaps I over-examine life. But without that aren't we just people plugged into a false world akin to the Matrix?



Photo: Erdal Ozdemir

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“I witnessed a funny and friendly conversation between two colleagues:

A: Oh, where are you from?

J: I am half Italian, half English, from Sardegna in Italy

A: I am from Sicily, I am full Italian.”

“I am close to the Shard in London. Fascinating building. Shard, Walkie Talkie, Gherkin are (skyscrapers) UK's answer to Empire State, Chrysler and Rockefeller Building. I don't want to remind you Boaty McBoatFace. You can Google that one. Naming schemes in UK are great :)”



Often we need to detoxify the emotional and intellectual demands of the modern world. And the best antidote for that is comedy. In my experience, in many conversations lie fantastic humorous content.

...

PHILOSOPHY: TOOTS FROM THE PAST

“Who controls the world? A leading research paper that looks into economic networks of ownership has found (among many other things) that a small number of shareholders whose ownership is across multiple different organisations own most of wealth and thus with that in hand have immense control over world economy: There is also a TED talk titled: Who controls the world.”

Our world is a special interest club. Humanity has been taken over by power hungry oligarchy that allows and propagates the co-existence of two types of society. One in which there is perpetual war and the other where there is security but work will never empower the individuals.



Into the Green - Erdal Ozdemir

Photo: Samara Doole

“I think there is a possibility that some time in near future we will all have a microchip implant in our brain:

- for homeostasis, continual health tracking and potentially aiding physiological

functions, early diagnosis of illness.

- this will make most computers, all smart devices, telephones redundant.

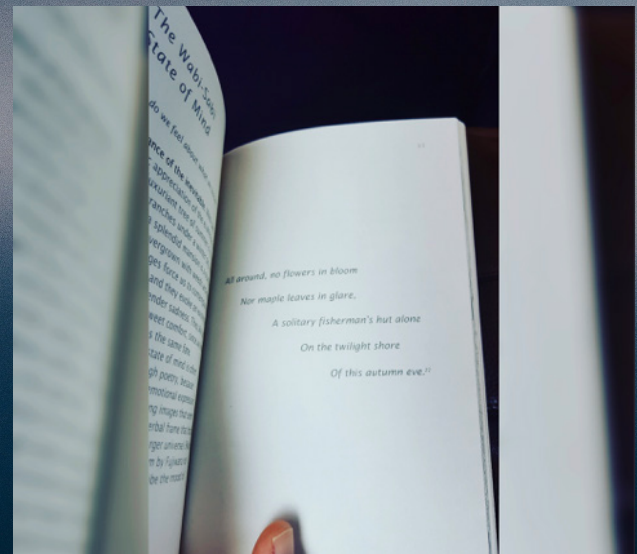
- any one person will be able to communicate with any other around the world.

- The implant may open the door to learning all the information in the universe very fast, passing data to brain.”

“Imagine a future where one type of microorganism produces carbon-neutral electricity and another type of microorganism neutralises any byproducts of the electricity production by the first set of microorganisms. That would be like tapping into automated, endless source of energy. :) I love combining science with dreams of a science fiction future :)”

...

For those that dare to dream, the future is always fascinating. One of the earliest science-fiction films, The Metropolis, successfully predicted many elements of a future society at the beginning of 20th century.



Wabi Sabi in a Book - Erdal Ozdemir

...

“Hello from Tokyo. I have to say, this place is amazing.

London will have to up its game to match Tokyo.

I had one of the best sandwiches, best coffee, best barbecue and best beer I have had here. The landscape, design architecture, people's culture and civility is just amazing.”

“Tomorrow is my birthday and I am in an existentialist mood. Having a cup of coffee now. As Tanizaki said, Were it not for shadows, there would be no beauty. Have a great day all.”

“34 years ago today, something happened and I was born. It took me a few years to realise that I exist. And the rest of the time was spent trying to make sense of existence and to live a fulfilling life. I have to confess; like most people before me I have failed in that. But I have the optimism of a sage. This weird, joyful, sad, unexplained, mysterious and often impressive journey of life continues. I thank my ancestors for the opportunity. Like a good sportsman, taking part is what matters.”

...

The modernity isn't some magical mode of existence that can transform our lives. In most cases modernity is slow death and a meaningless existence that has cast away many elements that make us human. In such cases I find that traveling and exploring other cultures reminds us many forgotten elements that will realign us with wonderfulness of life and people.

...



Flowers - Erdal Ozdemir

“I like to once in a while lose myself in places I don't know. I would discover parts of London, appreciate the architecture and history with some coffee in my hand, it helps because one gets to appreciate how many people have put so much of their effort to bring things together. It is like watching a story being retold not by the main characters but by the extras, who are equally important.”



Erdal Ozdemir is a writer, researcher and the editor of [Kintsugi](#) magazine. His books are available on [Amazon](#). He can be reached on his [website](#), [mastodon](#), [twitter](#) or on [Instagram @_ozdemire](#)

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COLLECTIVE NOUNS

- PART ONE

Jim Bowering



Photo: Benh Lieu Song CC-BY-SA

Birds have long held a special place in the imagination of humans. How many of us have seen birds in flight and never wondered what it would be like to fly? We associate flight, and therefore birds, with freedom. Flying free. Free as a bird. We use birds to describe character traits in our fellow humans. Someone might be an odd bird or a funny duck, a chicken or a pigeon. If someone is aggressive we might call them a hawk, if they're conciliatory, a dove. It should come as no surprise that we also use human-centred language when talking about birds.

Collective nouns are used to describe groups of similar things. We talk about a pod of orcas, a bank of elevators or a herd of cows. Most of the collective nouns are so commonplace that they are standard parts of the language. They are more likely to be used than even the most general term, group. We don't often refer to a herd of cows as a group of cows, or a pride of lions as a group of lions.

Collective nouns for groups of animals are called terms of venery if they are specific to the kind of animal, such as pride for lions. You don't get a pride of dogs or gnus. Venery is defined in the Collaborative International Dictionary of English as the art, act or practice of hunting. The practice of using terms of venery was begun by English hunting gentlemen at least as far back as the 1400s. It was part of their education and was used to set themselves apart from everyone who wasn't an educated gentleman.

Some of the most interesting collective nouns belong to birds. Swans get a lot of attention here. They come in herds, bevies, banks, drifts and squadrons, as well as the more romantic ballet of swans. My favourite for the big white birds is a grace of swans. On the ground there is a gaggle of geese. Flying, a skein. Rising on an updraft of warm air, you'll see a kettle of hawks. Swimming on the pond, a paddle of ducks. Chattering in the rainforest, a prattle of parrots. There will be a stand of flamingos, a mustering of storks and a wake of buzzards.

COLLECTIVE NOUNS - PART ONE



Photo: Oronbb CC-BY-SA

Owls get some respect. A group of them is called a parliament. Attractive birds get flattered, as in a radiance of cardinals. Being beautiful singers, here's an exaltation of larks. The corvids are singled out for slander. For crows it's a mob of crows or even a murder of crows. Ravens come in murders too, but also a conspiracy or even an unkindness of ravens. Magpies are associated with omens and portents so we call a group of them a tiding of magpies.

And there you have it, a whole flock of collective nouns.



Jim Bowering has fought wildfires and controlled traffic in the air and on the sea. Now he writes stories. You can see his books and articles on his [blog](#) and contact him via [email](#) or on [mastodon](#).

CULTURE: INTERVIEW WITH SINGER BLYTHE BAINES

Blythe Baines interviewed by Erdal Ozdemir



Photo: Luke Chesser

Hello Blythe, thank you for featuring for an interview with the Kintsugi magazine. Could you please tell us a bit about yourself, where are you from and how long have you been involved in music?

Hello! Thanks for having me! I was born in San Francisco, lived in Argentina for a bit, but have been living in Los Angeles for the past 8 or 9 years. Music has always been a part of my life, as I studied piano and was in a chorus as a kid, but I only really started making the type of music I'm releasing now a couple of years ago.

You have a great voice. I have listened to some of your tracks available on SoundCloud. How do you describe the music genre you work on?

Do you cover many genres or are you set on a single genre at the moment?

Thank you! I'd consider my genre to be somewhere between pop, hiphop, chill-hop and trap. It's really hard to put in a box. I don't specifically try to borrow from as many genres as I do, but my music always ends up being a weird amalgamation.

Who are your musical idols or inspirations?

Goodness, I've got so many. I love Bjork because of how true she is to herself in her art. She's never conformed and she's always delivered the messages that she's felt inspired to deliver. I also love Radiohead, Simon and Garfunkel, and

The Moody Blues. I always listened to Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers growing up because they were my dad's favourite band. I really love oldies, just because of the feeling they evoke. I could sit at home listening to oldies all day. I know the words to all of them.

How does the creative process work for you? Do you write your lyrics and music for the songs yourself?

Usually, my producer makes a beat and I come up with ideas based on the vibe I'm getting. After that, I just write. It usually doesn't take me too long to come up with the melody and lyrics. Most of the songs I release are the ones I've written in about 15 minutes. I can write really quickly when I'm feeling inspired. Within 3 or 4 hours we've usually got a full first draft of the beat and the vocals.

Do you engage in musical collaborations? Have you worked with other artists in the past?

I have, indeed! I frequently work with a rapper named Jyln Jml and I plan to do more collaborations in the future. One of my close friends and producers is an artist named Soren Bryce and it would be awesome to collaborate with her on something where we both sing. Although, I feel like I'd consider even working with a producer on a collaboration. Different producers yield completely different sounds.

Do you sometimes do covers of other artists' songs? Which ones have you done?

Somewhere on the internet I've got a cover of some Elvis and Kings of Leon. I mainly release my own stuff though.

Do you have favourite songs or artists that you listen to all the time? Who are they?

Lana Del Rey and Justin Bieber are my guilty pleasure listens. A couple of my favourite songs in general, though, include; Black Flies by Ben Howard, Time from Inception by Hans Zimmer, Eventually by Tame Impala, Only Time by Enya

and Iris by the Goo Goo Dolls.

Many musicians experiment with many different genres before they either settle on one, or modify existing genres to create something uniquely their own. How was your musical development? Which elements or genres in music interest you the most?

I started out a couple of years ago recording at rapper friends' home studios. I had never listened to a lot of hiphop, but the producers I was working with were hiphop producers. I always figured I'd end up making rock music, but I really liked the way my voice sounded on the tracks that these producers were making, so I started to experiment with that and later decided that this was the sound for me. And honestly, I think I'm interested in every element of the creation of music. I just really enjoy making something out of nothing—creating words and melodies to fill the silence.

Did you attend a music school?

I was in a pretty hardcore chorus growing up. We had to learn music theory and sight reading and we sang songs in all kinds of different languages. The year after I left, the chorus performed at Obama's Inauguration.

Most creative people work across different themes, apart from music do you work in other mediums, are there any other mediums that you find interesting and that you would like to try e.g. such as writing or painting?

I love creative writing. I wrote 35k words of a novel once for NaNoWriMo. I never finished it though. I'll have to go back to it sometime. It was a murder mystery. I really admire people who are good at visual arts because I have no talent at all when it comes to painting or drawing.

Your EP will be realised in a few months. How do you feel about it? Have you settled on the songs that will feature? When is the projected release date?

CULTURE: INTERVIEW WITH SINGER BLYTHE BAINES

The release date is January 5th, 2018, and yes, I know exactly which songs will be featured. I'm very excited for people to finally see what I've been working on since my last single.

Artists are conscious people, how would you like your audience and fans to perceive your work? What do you hope your music can do for them?

I'm a big believer in the Law of Attraction, so one thing I want to be super conscious of is putting out positive messages into the world. There's one "dramatic" song on this EP, but the placement of it is right before the last song, where the situation gets resolved. The resolution is always a super important thing to have. You want to end a project on a happy note. I've got one song which is essentially about abundance and how to get to the mental state where you can receive it, but it's kind of disguised as a regular pop song. I want the people who listen to my music to be able to just feel happy when they listen to it and hopefully resonate.

If you had to choose between Miles Davis and Elvis Presley, which one would it be? Which music do you prefer out of the two?

This is the hardest question. I got a Miles Davis Kind of Blue vinyl record for my birthday this year from my jazz pianist friend Paxton and I've been listening to it on repeat in my bedroom, but I also love Elvis...I'm actually going to have to say Elvis, just because "Can't Help Falling in Love" is a personal favourite of mine, and Elvis was a dreamboat.

Eminem or Britney Spears?

Britney!

The Black Keys or The Arctic Monkeys?

Black Keys

Do you like 1980s music? George Michael, Depeche Mode, Pet Shop Boys and the plethora of others?

I love "Africa" by Toto so much that I actually went to Africa. Just got back a couple of weeks ago. Phil Collins is also wonderful.

You are a young musician, how do you find the current state of the music industry, does it give you encouragement that young artists have a good chance of releasing their works and reaching their audience?

Honestly, I think anyone can do it if they put enough energy and effort into it. Also, positive mindset is so important in terms of even finding the right people to work with. You've just got to be confident that you'll meet the right people to help bring your vision to life on your artistic journey.

Where would you like to be artistically in 5 years?

Hopefully I'll have grown as an artist by then. I feel like this EP is the beginning of a creative journey. I want to release at least two albums in that span of time. Also, hopefully there'll be more people listening to my music!

Do you play musical instruments or are you planning to learn to play any?

I'm alright at piano and guitar and I can play the tin whistle.

What is a typical daily work schedule for you like?

For this EP, our work schedule is 3 days a week. We usually start at noon and stay as long as it takes to finish a song!

CULTURE: INTERVIEW WITH SINGER BLYTHE BAINES

How does your family and friends respond to your work?

My friends have been very supportive. I don't show much of my work to my family (showing it to the family is always the scariest) but I know that they're Googling it. My family seems to like the stuff they've heard. The worst was when I released a song ironically using the word "daddy" (big inside joke amongst my friends and me) and somehow my dad found it ended up showing it to my 91-year-old grandma.



Blythe Baines is a singer-songwriter from USA. Her EP is due for release on 5th January 2018. Some of her work can be found at [SoundCloud](#). Blythe has a presence on Twitter @BlytheBaines

SELMA 50: THOSE THAT CAME BEFORE

Cee Jaye



Photo: Frank McKenna

In the distance, if you listen closely, you can hear the quiet footsteps of Those That Came Before. Descended from warriors, they silently crossed the threshold of the Door of No Return to involuntarily travel from their homeland across the Middle Passage, immigrating to a new world completely polar opposite of their familiars. You can hear the pause in their footsteps as the reality of their circumstance sets in, no one is coming to rescue them and this is now home.

The peregrination begins anew but this time the noises are of feet firmly planting themselves one next to the other as they build an impenetrable foundation that will allow them to slowly and gently lift each other up onto each other's shoulders and over time, via spiritual osmosis, to teach and encourage as many courageous generations as it takes to build this living, breathing wall of solace and hope that will

SELMA 50: THOSE THAT CAME BEFORE

someday answer the prayers of being allowed to live in an America sans violence and hate but instead in a society where there is acceptance, dignity, respect, equality, and justice for all.

“Millions didn’t make it but I was one of the ones that did...” Marvin Winans wrote these beautiful lyrics and his brother, Bebe, sang “Millions” at Oprah Winfrey’s weekend event celebrating *“Selma and The Legends Who Paved The Way.”*

2015 marks the 50th anniversary of the three Selma to Montgomery marches: March 7, 1965: Blood Sunday: John Lewis and Hosea Williams attempted to lead approximately 600 people across the Edward Pettus Bridge and their efforts were thwarted by an army of state troopers and policemen who blinded the marchers with tear gas and beat them unmercifully with billy clubs and bullwhips.

March 9, 1965: Turnaround Tuesday: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led approximately 2000 people to Edward Pettus Bridge and once at the bridge told the protesters to disperse.

After Bloody Sunday, on March 15th, in his *Special Message to Congress: The American Promise*, President Lyndon Johnson said, “...the harsh fact is that in many places in this country men and women are kept from voting simply because they are Negroes... Every device of which human ingenuity is capable has been used to deny this wrong... .a century has passed...and yet the Negro is not equal. And the promise is unkept.”

March 25, 1965: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led this successful four-day march from Selma to Montgomery with approximately 25,000 protesters escorted by 1,000 policemen and 2,000 military troops.

In his commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery marches, President Obama remarked,

“We know the march is not yet over. We know the race is not yet won. We know that reaching that blessed destination where we are judged, all of us, by the content of our character requires admitting as much, facing up to the truth...We honour those who walked so we could run. We must run so our children can soar. And we will not grow weary. For we believe in the power of an awesome God, and we believe in this country’s sacred promise.”

Dr. Daryl Michael Scott, professor of history at Howard University and president of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, said, “There’s a thirst for history that exists in the African-American community that has no true counterpart in the mainstream culture. We are now almost officially the keepers of the American memory because nobody else wants to remember...Americans are mis-educated. They don’t know themselves, they don’t know what they’ve built, and therefore it can so easily be taken away from them.”

Dr. Scott’s thoughts are illustrated every February. As a child, I learned that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. *had a dream and marched around the country telling it to people*; George Washington Carver *invented things out of peanuts*; Booker T. Washington *was an educator that opened a school*; and Harriet Tubman *was a fugitive and the conductor of the Underground Railroad*. Like many of my peers, college added to these meagre sentences.

Negro History week is the creation of historian Carter G. Woodson, who expanded the celebration of two Americans who fought for African-American equality, Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass both celebrate birthdays in February. Harriet Tubman’s first name is not even Harriet. She not only helped hundreds of slaves escape to freedom but she also served in the Civil War as a cook, nurse, armed scout, and spy.

SELMA 50: THOSE THAT CAME BEFORE

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Booker T. Washington opened the historical Tuskegee Institute, and was an advisor on racial matters for both Presidents Taft and Roosevelt and secretly financed court cases dealing with segregation. George Washington Carver did invent things out of peanuts, over one hundred products to be exact, including dyes, plastics, and even gasoline.

Earlier this year, in February, the PBS News Hour reported on a 21-year-old, young man, Justin Giuliano, who decided to offer American history Tweets, **#BlackHistoryYouD idntLearnInSchool**, about people and events he believes deserves to be remembered: "Black history is usually reserved for a few historical figures, and even then they are pacified or white-washed. I really wanted to change the conversation around black history this year."

Ideas have improved, slowly. During his Selma address, President Obama remarked, "To deny this progress, this hard-won progress – our progress – would be to rob us of our own agency, our own capacity, our responsibility to do what we can to make America better."

As Martin Luther King, Jr. said after Bloody Sunday, "The pattern of their feet as they walked through Jim Crow barriers in the great stride toward freedom is the thunder of the marching men of Joshua and the world rocks beneath their tread...How long will it take? Not long."

On August 6, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act which prohibited

racial or political barriers or election practices that would deny African-Americans their right to vote; and require any jurisdictions with a history of discrimination to receive federal approval before they could change and implement any election laws. In 1970, 1975, and 1982 the sitting Presidents extended the Voting Rights Act. In 2006, Congress extended the Voting Rights Act for an additional 25 years. In 2013, the United States Supreme Court opined that the rescinding of the requirement of historically discriminatory jurisdictions needing federal approval prior to changing and implementing election laws is "not designed to punish for the past; its purpose is to ensure a better future."

Today's American history is filled with cultures and ethnicities wrought with the same vitriolic prejudices, biases, stereotypes, and racism. Young people in the 50s and 60s made courageous decisions to demand change and successfully obtain federal civil rights. In 2015, we have Millennial grassroots movements like Million Hoodies, Hands Up United, the Black Youth Project, and the Dream Defenders. These groups work together to change even more local and federal policies and laws.

Tory Russell, founder of Hands Up United, said, "This is not the civil rights movement. This is the oppressed people's movement. So, when you see us, you're going to [see] some gay folk, you're going to [see] some queer folk, you're going to [see] some poor black folk, you're going to [see] some brown folk, you're going to [see] some white people. And we're all out here for the same reasons. We want to be free."

The Millennial activists are equally as tenacious and focused as those that led and crossed the infamous Edward Pettus Bridge. The Millennials march for justice and change. Jessica Pierce of the Black Youth Project states, "We're doing it by technology, but we're also doing all the tried-and-true methods as well...we're on the computers and we're also in the streets..."

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Millennials realise that their voices need to reach the ears of anyone in a position that can affect the necessary changes. Ashley Yates of Millennial Activist United describes her meeting with President Obama: “He didn’t come from a place of the highest authority in the land. He came from a place of – ‘let’s have a conversation about it.’”

I believe there are probably many people who are surprised that this generation is actively concerned about the future of our nation and our place in the world. I was pleasantly surprised to find that they know more about history than I did. They are grateful for every single action and step taken by their ancestors and Civil Rights predecessors.

Yates summed it up beautifully: “The day we met with the president was...the 59th anniversary of Rosa Parks not getting up from her seat. We definitely realise that we’re standing on the shoulders of the people who came before us.”



Cee Jaye is a freelance writer and self-proclaimed Literary Chameleon. Her work includes nearly four years as a columnist for London’s LIVE Magazine, penning an episodic series for N.Y. Cable Access Television, and co-authoring “Racism and Real Life” for academic journal, The Radical Teacher. Living abroad heightened Cee Jaye’s appreciation for food, art, and travel. Currently, she resides in Southern California with her family and has completed her first novel. This article was originally published in LitroNY website. Cee’s other articles are available from [LitroNY](#).

SCIENCE FICTION: EUROPA BURBS

Dianne Dotson



Photo: Ferdinand Stohr

Nell's desk activated and she put her hands inside Captures, ready to take notes with her gloves. Mr. Kidd called out "Good morning!" Everyone muffled back the same greeting.

Nell felt irritable today. The weather had been unusually foul, and her hair frizzed badly, which made her cranky. She pushed her mousy hair over her ears and glanced up. She gasped.

A hologram had appeared next to Mr. Kidd. There stood renowned Dr. Sora Mallory, who they had just reviewed the past week. She had worked as an Exterior anthropologist for the past two decades. Nell had been interested in her work, and how the outer worlds compared to the inner worlds.

"Class, this is Dr. Mallory," announced Mr. Kidd. "Dr. Mallory is tuning in live from Titan Station this morning. Please wish her good morning."

"Good morning, Dr. Mallory," droned the class, but Nell fairly sang it out in her excitement.

"Good morning, Sixth Years!" replied Dr. Mallory's holographic form. She stood tall and proudly, her cropped grey hair lowlighted in teal. She wore a prim, navy pantsuit and a nametag reading "MALLORY," but Nell could not see the tag's insignia.

"I like her hair," said Cheetah.

"Shh!" said Nell, leaning in, ready to write.

Mr. Kidd glared at them both.

SCIENCE FICTION: EUROPA BURBS

Dr. Mallory said, “Today I will talk about some of my research over the years, as an anthropologist. As Mr. Kidd has taught you, I study people, especially people, and how the outer world societies compare and contrast to the inner ones. I know you’ve recently learned the various dynamics of government and history related to Exterior colonisation. Now, who among you has visited the Interior?”

Nell’s arm shot up, as did three others’. Nell knew not everyone could go to the inner planets. She felt a special pride, even as the rest of the class sniffed audibly.

“I’m glad to see that some of you have visited the Interior,” said Dr. Mallory. “I hope the rest of you can someday. While we have everything we need out here, it’s good to explore our origins, to understand who we are and how we came to be.

“Today I want to talk a bit about how we approach living in the Exterior versus the Interior,” she went on. She brought up another hologram, showing Earth, Mars, and the asteroid belt. “Here we see the Interior worlds, and when I zoom in you can see the various stations around them, and on some of the larger asteroids. These were the stepping stones that brought us all out here. You would not be sitting here in class, were it not for those who came before. But what makes life out here so vastly different?” Dr. Mallory asked them.

Nell’s hand sprang up again. “We live on moons,” she said.

“Correct,” said Dr. Mallory.

To Nell’s surprise, Mick said, “We’re far away from the sun.”

“Yes,” affirmed Dr. Mallory. “And that is a crucial factor in understanding our approach to life out here, where it is cold and dark.”

Cheetah raised her hand. “It’s a revolving door

out here,” she said, “people are always coming and going, either to different moons or further out or back in to the Interior.”

“Exactly so!” Dr. Mallory said, clearly impressed. Nell beamed at her friend.

“So what we can already discern,” the scientist went on, “is that life for us is very different depending on where we are and the environment we live in. And if we live in a jumping off point to further in the Exterior, it does indeed give our settlements a feeling of transience. Yet for those coming from the Interior, even Europa can feel very much like a pioneer settlement!”

Nell pondered what Dr. Mallory said. While the anthropologist spoke about commerce and livelihoods throughout the system, Nell’s mind drifted. She thought back to her history classes, and how the first people landing on Europa had perished in a horrible accident. There were risks aplenty out here, despite its now being a midway point of sorts these days. She could almost picture that landing in her mind

“We regret to announce there has been an anomaly with Foras Lander. Further details forthcoming.”

“Today we mourn the tragic deaths of the Foras Lander crew, which perished shortly after landing on the surface of Europa.”

“We shall persevere! We shall return and we shall build. We shall honor their memories!”

“We asked for footage from the Interior of the ship prior to the explosion, but were banned from press coverage. We will continue to pursue the matter and get to the bottom of what happened to Foras Lander.”

Nell’s eyes glazed over and she could only hear a vague humming as Dr. Mallory continued. Nell could just see the inside of that ship, and its crew celebrating cautiously as they touched down. “Welcome to Europa!” someone had shouted. Nell looked all about her, at the

nervous and excited crew, engaging a powering down of their craft, with its floodlights illuminating the icy surface of Europa. She happened to look at the console, and saw a strange dark item, about half a foot long, appear. She turned and looked around, and there were now several of them, in front of each controller. Consternation and wonder rose among them. One woman picked up one of the objects, turned it over in her hand, and said, "What is this? Is this a joke? It looks like some kind of figurine."

Then, all around them, fire burst forth. Nell jerked upright in her seat and gasped.

The entire class turned to stare. Mr. Kidd raised his eyebrows at her, and Dr. Mallory halted and looked straight at her. She had an odd look on her face, not of anger or disapproval at Nell's behavior, but a sort of curiosity.

"Did you have a question?" she asked Nell.

Nell blushed and wanted to launch herself out of the class and run home in the rain.

"I—no," she said sheepishly.

Dr. Mallory replied, "Very well then. If any of you would like to ask me any questions, you can contact me and I will get back to you with an answer. Mr. Kidd, thank you again for allowing me to speak to your class. Your questions were wonderful!"

Mr. Kidd said, "Now class, let us thank Dr. Mallory for her time and hope she returns again someday!"

"Thank-you," the class said robotically. Nell's thanks came in a muted voice.

She noticed Mick and his friends snickering, and wondered if it was about her. Then she saw the perfectly coiffed and overly groomed smirks of Sarah and Dare, and knew everyone had seen and heard Nell's reaction. It felt as if everyone mocked her. Except for Cheetah.

She leaned over to Nell and whispered, "What

was that all about?"

Nell twitched. "I...I..." but she didn't know what had happened, truthfully. She said, subdued, "I must have dozed off. God that was embarrassing."

"Yes it was," Cheetah said vehemently. Nell blushed again.

What had happened? Normally Nell kept a strict focus in class, something that Mick often made fun of.

Excerpt from the short story EUROPA BURBS



Dianne is a Science Fiction and Fantasy Writer. Whovian. Ravenclaw. Taco hound. Instagram/Goodreads/Mastodon/Ello/Snapchat/tumblr/Pinterest: jdiannedotson. Her blog can be found at <http://jdiannedotson.com>. Dianne dreamed up other worlds and their characters as a child in the 1980s. She formed her own neighbourhood astronomy club before age 10, to educate her friends about the universe. In addition to writing stories, she drew and painted her characters, designed their outrageous space fashions, and created travel guides and glossaries for the worlds she invented. As an adult, Dianne earned a life science degree and spent several years working in research. Today Dianne, her husband, and their children all make up a house of serious nerds who enjoy walking, creating, and eating Dianne's baked goods.

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ART: ON OIL PAINTING

Paul Nathan



Photo: Paul Nathan

Oil painting, in the Western tradition, conjures up visions of incredibly detailed art - the Mona Lisa, the Ghent altarpiece, the Pre-Raphaelites, an endless stream of pompous elite portraits, van Gogh and Monet's shimmering visions, and finally to the mind-jarring constructions of the Modernists and Abstract Impressionists... and then a fading out to new media - acrylics, mixed media, temperas, and so forth.

What we will do in this piece is to begin to pick past this veil of conceptions and understand at a base level what the medium really *is*.

Let's begin with a quote from Pirsig's famous book:

... the idea that "Here is the machine, isolated in time and in space from everything else in the universe. It has no relationship to you,

you have no relationship to it, other than to turn certain switches, maintain voltage levels, check for error conditions—" and so on.

There are painters that have no relationship to *paint*. They think in terms of *colour*, what the colour does for them, how to place colour. The paint itself is of no consequence: it is but a tool to accomplish their task. That is their situation. But in this essay, let's journey to enter the Paint itself, to orient ourselves in the context of the medium and to begin to coexist as artists with the oil.

Once upon a time - we do not know when, we do not know how - a Human took an egg white, and some rock dust, and mixed the rock dust with the egg white. It formed a quick drying substance that could be smeared onto a rock face (or a piece of wood, or a papyrus, or other flat surface).

ART: ON OIL PAINTING



Photo: Paul Nathan

And the Human taught other humans, and this was Paint. In time, the Humans learned that by tying hair to sticks, they could manipulate the Paint better, and they called these hairy sticks: *Brushes*. This was a beginning of Painting. Painting with Eggs was done for many years (and we call it Egg Tempera today: it is experiencing a revival of interest in 2017). Painting with hot Beeswax mixed with rock dust was learned, and this was done for many years too (This is called Encaustics, and it too is experiencing a revival of interest in 2017).

It is difficult to properly estimate when Painting began, but it is very old, stretching back before recorded history. Many ways of painting do not result in artworks that will last. But we know most cultures have visual arts. So we will take it thus as a given that Painting and the Visual Arts generally, are

part and parcel of what it means to be a Human.

Sometime between, say, 1200 and 1430 A.D., someone got the bright idea to mix vegetable oil into the egg white mix; then, finally, someone tried out oil alone, and this was Good. Vegetable (pressed) oils were tried from flax plants (linseed), walnuts, poppy, sunflowers, safflowers (and more). Each oil had a different drying time and a different way they affected how the resulting paint mixed in. Experimental painters tried heating the oil, burning the oil, mixing the oil with lead, tree resins, wax, chalk dust, and every kind of coloured substance possible. Over time, artists learned, experimented, worked with alchemists (and then chemists) to develop better materials and methods.

ART: ON OIL PAINTING

Chemistry produced two major flowerings of technical understanding in oil painting: the first was the multitude of new pigments - new dusts for the paint. The second was the science of examining samples from ancient paintings to understand the nature of what makes one painting last well for centuries and another crack and fade.

Today, we have unsurpassed chemical understanding of the Paint itself. Brushes come in both natural hair and synthetic fibre forms. Oils are exceptionally pure. Pigments are refined. And All Is Doing Well.

But we have lost two things in common practice since the early 1400s: the hands-on making of paint and the hands-on making of brushes. Brush-making is not of this essay, and is a considerably more lost art for the common artist than paint making (or "grinding").

Let's get our hands dirty and get into the Paint. We're going to need some vegetable oil. Linseed oil is traditional, and can be gotten at a fine art store (alkali refined or cold pressed, either works for this). But you can get some La Tourangelle Roast Walnut oil - pour off what you need for this work, then store the rest in the fridge and spread on noodles for dinner. Next, we need some pigment. Fine art stores typically carry pigment - I recommend "raw umber" or "prussian blue" pigments initially. Painting is not a modern tool, all safety and soft edges: oil painting comes from an earlier time with more hardship in life. Thus it is that you can buy lead paint, cadmium paint, and other heavy metals for use on the canvas, along with the poisonous solvent "pure distilled gum turpentine",

which smells lovely and, over time, enough will seep through your skin, get into your bones and cause an exciting and unpleasant early death. *So it goes in the old trades.* And, finally, you will need a palette knife to mix with (a device called a muller is the traditional tool, but they are expensive) and a clean surface (a discarded kitchen tile is excellent). Supposing that you want to take this paint and use it - a canvas is good, and a brush would help too, particularly for this entrance into the Paint.

Having acquired these materials, set up a workbench: pigment, oil, palette knife, and surface.



Photo: Paul Nathan

ART: ON OIL PAINTING

Take a pinch of pigment out of the container and put it on the surface. Push it about with the knife. If it is highly refined, the particles will be of similar size; if it is less refined, the pigments will have varying sizes. Do not breathe the dust: regardless of chemical activity, dust is harmful to the lungs. Understand the dusty dry pigment and how it moves. Now, e'er so carefully, using an eye dropper or other fine measuring device, drip a drop of oil onto the pigment and mix it about with the knife. Some of the pigment will be *bound* into the oil and a paste will be formed, some of it will just clump up into sort of almost-mud flakes, and some won't bind at all. Add more oil, mix more with the knife. As you add more, you start seeing the paint emerge from the dust: a paste, oilier and flowing more here, dryer and flakier there. Mix, mix, mix until you have a fine consistency with as little oil as possible. Take your brush and draw it through the paint, then paint onto the surface. Observe carefully the ridges and how the paint lumps and shapes itself as you draw the brush away. A form of processing called "vacuum bodied heating" produces vacuum bodied oil or "Stand oil", and the ridges from *that* paint will level out, whereas plain linseed or walnut oil will give an oil that *leaves ridges in*. Now add more oil, and turn the paint wetter and oilier. Again, work the brush through the paint and understand the interplay of pigment, oil, and brush.

If you have a canvas ready, brush the paint on; feel free to mix up more pigment into your paint puddle - or more oil. Your experiments will show how the changing of the ratio of oil to pigment changes how the paint comes off the brush.

Clean up by rinsing the brush in spare oil, then use a paper towel on the surface. Soap and water takes care of the rest. Remember oil in crumpled rags are flammable: hang the paper towel for 2-4 days until the oil is dry, then throw it out.

From this simple start grows the entirety of oil painting. To understand the Paint gives you control over the process and the output.



Photo: Paul Nathan

ART: ON OIL PAINTING

APPENDIX

Oil paints cure at different rates as a function of heat, oxygen, pigment, oil, and additives. Typically, all of them take days to dry. Linseed, walnut, and safflower are the standard oils, in increasing drying duration. Linseed yellows over time, so walnut or safflower are often chosen as the oil for whites, blues, and purples.

Most older bright pigments (cadmiums, chromiums, cobalts) are very bad to breath. If you want to "grind" them into paint, a P100 respirator for chemical elements is essentially required for safety, to say nothing of your work environment.

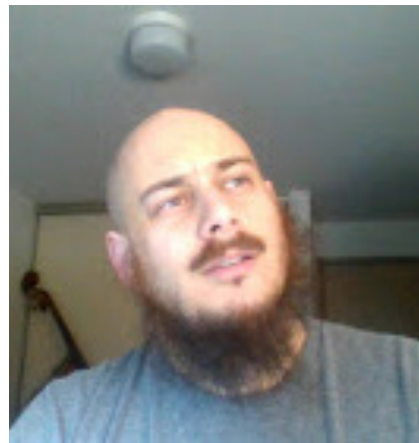
Don't use lead white/red/orange/yellow unless you are comfortable doing hazmat disposal. Seriously. Just don't.

Vacuum bodied/stand oil levels paint and is highly viscous. It is a common additive to change how paint works.

Odourless mineral spirits is the common safe solvent today; solvent-free approaches exist, formed around rinsing the brushes in slow-curing oils such as safflower.

Oil painting chemistry is its own minor subfield as an intersection between coatings chemistry, art conservatorship, and art history.

My preferred medium is one drop stand oil, one drop linseed oil. This removes ridges and gives a non-runny paint. Mix with a "putty" mix such as a calcite + stand oil medium to add a bit of transparency.



Paul Nathan is a programmer and oil painter living in Seattle, Washington with his family. His life calling involves understanding the way things are put together, from ideas to programs to paint. He can be contacted through [mastodon](#), [email](#), [tumblr](#) or [twitter](#)

SHORT STORY: THE SAINT

Erdal Ozdemir

"Why are you here," asked Father Pierre, seating adjacent to the meekly weeping man, in the otherwise empty church.

- I'm in great pain father, I feel remorse for what the world is, for all the wrongs in it and for all the suffering.

- We all do; we all feel powerless at times. You have to let go of the world. Embrace everything you can't chance. Fear not of loss, anger, suffering, pain. When you overcome fear then you shall have the power to change.

* * *

- Have you ever wanted to scream as loud as you can, father, but nothing came out of your mouth? That is how I feel. I feel broken like a window shattered into its thousands; how can one put back the pieces together?

His name was William, and he visited Father Pierre each day for a conversation.

* * *

They walked in the garden of the church, often talking for a while until they parted ways. Usually they walked in the rose garden side by side in total silence.

"Are you a religion man," Father Pierre asked, "because I'm not. I dedicated my life to society. The empty church inside is what is left of the community to which I dedicated my life to. If you don't talk or scream you won't be heard. Sometimes you don't need to put the pieces together. You need a new start to find the answer you seek."

- Do I seek an answer?

- Isn't that why you are here?

They watched chirping birds hopping around the rose bushes.

* * *

In a flatshare, William lay on his bed motionless, looking into the void. His room was covered in heaps of paper, manuscripts and notes. He could sense the aroma of Jasmin rice from the kitchen and burning leaves outside the estate, otherwise his feelings were numb.

"You need to remove all layers of falsehood, there is no God. You need to reclaim your life and reconnect," were Father Pierre's last words that echoed in his ears.

* * *

William felt paralysed, unable to move. And yet, unexpectedly, he jumped off his bed, pulling his backpack from the corner, he put a few pieces of clothes and some belongings in it.

He put all the papers on the floor in a bin-liner, rushing outside the house, he found the furnace burning leaves. He burnt all his manuscripts and writings in the furnace.

In his room, he wrote, *"Today is the first day of my new life,"* in a notebook and put that in his bag.

Leaving the house keys in the kitchen, he left.

* * *

William observed the commuters, the buildings that stood in his route, the roads and the flow of life, as he walked the streets of London for the last time.

A child smiled at him and he smiled back.

At St. Pancras he bought a one-way ticket to Paris.

He counted what last money he had. Just a few days food and shelter at most.

Several hours later, he was walking in the Latin Quarter in Paris, not knowing why he was there. It was getting dark and cold.

* * *

The narrow streets led to other narrow streets. The streetlights began submerging the shadows of the dusk. His feet brought him to a Greek restaurant he had been to before. He ate gyro in the restaurant at the same table he'd sat a decade ago. Music played in the background echoing lyrics: *"And the light inside will only shine for you."*

"What is your biggest dream," he imagined his girlfriend asking him a decade before. A smile appeared on his face. He didn't remember what his response was. Someone was playing an electronic guitar in the street. He joined the crowd watching the musician.

* * *

The truth had dawned on him. It didn't matter who he was, where he was or where he was going. Living was a universal matter. And there was no greater happiness than being free. And there was no greater freedom than being in custody of one's own life and doing the things one loved, cherished and valued. He felt free. He had no idea of what

was to come next. He knew that regardless of what was to come, he was free. Every man died eventually. No, there was no point of fear of death or loss. He was beginning to shed away his fears and worries. He felt a heavenly calm and liberation. He laughed, encouraged and commended the musician. Later on, they had a conversation, and were on friendly terms. The musician introduced him to some of his friends. The following day, with a group of musicians they were driving on a highway to the Atlantic Coast. And it was only the second day of his new life.



Erdal Ozdemir is a writer, researcher and the editor of [Kintsugi](#) magazine. His books are available on [Amazon](#). He can be reached on his [website](#), [mastodon](#), [twitter](#) or on [Instagram @_ozdemir](#)

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ART: A LIFE IN ILLUSTRATIONS

María Lourdes Escobar (Original Article in Spanish by Estela Escobar)



María Lourdes Escobar

I am inspired by moments, insignificant details that create a different world for me, in insecurities, fears, ghosts of the past. I am inspired by what I experienced and in my dreams, in my struggle and in being a woman.

María Lourdes Escobar



In my works I try to capture the beauty, strength and sensuality of women. I identify myself in them, I think that is something incredible, although honestly, I do not find them senseful until they are finished; when I take pencil and paper I let my imagination fly, I draw with my heart, I enter my crazy world and the results are the expected.

The good thing about art is that each person can interpret it as they feel it, having a different vision of it, or, simply feelings that are far from what I really want to express. Something curious that happened to me in a publication that I made, was; a young lady comments that she saw sex in the work, although really far from that feeling, what I wanted to capture was a moment of sadness, it caused me a lot of grace.



María Lourdes Escobar

ART: A LIFE IN ILLUSTRATIONS



María Lourdes Escobar



María Lourdes Escobar, was enrolled to the School of Fine Arts of Santa Cruz de Tenerife at the age of 11, where she studied for three years, despite being younger than official admissions age. She couldn't continue her studies in art due to economic realities that prevented her. Art has always been part of her life, and with the encouragement of her best friend Jesus Barez she returned back to Art. Jesus Barez recognised Lourdes' talent, saying: "these works have to be seen by the world, artist ". He supported her and supports her tiredness in a way that is anything but easy. Lourdes, at fifty-one years of age, dreams that one day her works will be seen by the world as Wassily Kandinsky would say "The artist is the hand that, through a certain key, vibrates the human soul". Lourdes can be reached on her [Instagram](#) feed @_lourdesescobar, and on Youtube channel: Lourdes Escobar Hernandez. For commissions of illustrations Lourdes can be reached through Instagram.